Direct flights from Bangalore to Bahrain *via* Dubai

10. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:-

(a) the average number of passengers travelling between Bangalore, Dubai and Bahrain every week; and

(b) whether Government would take steps to run direct flights from Bangalore to Bahrain *via* Dubai to facilitate NRIs based in Dubai and Bahrain to visit Bangalore frequently?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) Average number of passengers travelling every week from Bangalore to Dubai and Bahrain is 508 and 40 respectively.

(b) There are no plans at present to introduce direct air services between Bangalore and Bahrain.

Airport at Sikkim

11. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Bagdogra is the only airport to link Gangtok by road which taken 5/6 hours to reach the capital of Sikkim;

(b) whether linking Gangtok to Delhi and other places of the State by air will boost development of Sikkim; and

(c) if so, whether there is any plan under consideration to provide the State capital with an airport?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) There is a proposal from State Government to provide the State capital with an airport near Pakyong, 38 kms. south of Gangtok under 10th Finance Commission.